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RUEHKB/AMEMBASSY BAKU IMMEDIATE 5440
RUEHEK/AMEMBASSY BISHKEK IMMEDIATE 1758
RUEHDBU/AMEMBASSY DUSHANBE IMMEDIATE 6664
RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL IMMEDIATE 0710
RUEHNT/AMEMBASSY TASHKENT IMMEDIATE 9290
INFO RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING PRIORITY 5993
RUEHRL/AMEMBASSY BERLIN PRIORITY 0490
RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD PRIORITY 0010
RUEHKV/AMEMBASSY KYIV PRIORITY 4391
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 3091
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY 5687
RUEHTL/AMEMBASSY TALLINN PRIORITY 5142
RUEHSI/AMEMBASSY TBILISI PRIORITY 6095
RUEHWR/AMEMBASSY WARSAW PRIORITY 9263
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RHMFISS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RHMFISS/COMSOCEUR VAIHINGEN GE PRIORITY
RHHJJAA/JICPAC HONOLULU HI PRIORITY
RHMFISS/HQ USCENCOM MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY
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E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/04/2017
TAGS: [MARR](#) [MOPS](#) [AMGT](#) [AFIN](#) [BCXP](#) [ECON](#) [PGOV](#) [ZK](#)
SUBJECT: ESTABLISHING A NORTHERN GROUND LINE OF
COMMUNICATION TO SUPPLY OEF

Classified By: John Gastright, reasons 1.4.(g)

¶1. (U) This is an information cable for addressee posts and offers a basis for internal embassy discussion before a Request for Information (RFI) is released to the private sector.

¶2. (C//REL NATO) SUMMARY: US forces in Afghanistan are eighty-five percent dependent on supplies moved through Pakistan. As the Distribution Process Owner, responsible for moving supplies from factory to foxhole, DOD's US Transportation Command (USTRANSCOM) is beginning an effort to reestablish northern ground routes into Afghanistan to provide alternative additional capacity. Today, all supplies are moved by commercial vendors under contracts let by the US Army's Surface Deployment and Distribution Command (SDDC), the Army Component of USTRANSCOM. Department of Defense advises that the traffic and transit face for shipments will be commercial, with no/no anticipated U.S. military presence.

The Acquisition Process is as follows: In early November 2007, USTRANSCOM plans to issue a Request for Information (RFI) to the worldwide commercial transportation industry to challenge it to develop alternative routing proposals and cost estimates. USTRANSCOM Staff will review RFI responses, select proposals that have merit, and then move to the Request for Proposal (RFP) stage, offering contracts for commercial vendors. RFI and RFP proposals will be advertised in the US Commerce Daily. As the RFI process goes forward, USTRANSCOM welcomes comments

from embassies in the region, including Commercial Attaches and USAID Business Development sections. Points of Contact are listed in paragraph 7. This cable is an effort to better coordinate with embassies in the region; no outreach to local vendors is desired at this time.
END SUMMARY.

¶3. (C//REL NATO) BACKGROUND: The USTRANSCOM RFI will cover all types of supply except arms/ammunition, which are moved by air into Afghanistan, and fuel products, which are procured by the Defense Logistics Agency (DLA) under separate contracts. DLA has set the standard for the current USTRANSCOM effort by reducing the amount of fuel procured in Pakistan from close to one hundred percent to around 70% over the past two years, with alternative procurement taking place in Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan by commercial vendors, who then move fuel through Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan, into Afghanistan by road and rail. Note: until 2005 USTRANSCOM moved various types of supplies including food and construction materials using rail-links out of US depots in Europe into Afghanistan over routes that moved through Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Russia, Ukraine, and Poland.

USTRANSCOM recognizes that any ground route will cross multiple borders through areas with limited infrastructure. USTRANSCOM's desired end state is a commercially run line of communication from northern Europe to Bahgram Airbase, Afghanistan (near Kabul) to transport all types of supplies, with the exception of

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arms, ammunition and fuel. END BACKGROUND.

¶4. (C//REL NATO) COMMERCIAL SHIPPING NEEDS: Department of Defense wishes to emphasize that the transit face will be commercial, with no/no anticipated U.S. military presence. Maximum use of local commercial firms is desired. Once the RFI has been released, post may encourage local firms to compete for this contract or to team with larger commercial firms, if they lack sufficient capacity. USTRANSCOM intent is to ship a constant amount of cargo over such a route. Firms that can procure materials locally are desirable considering transportation costs. Trans-loading operations are understood to be required in any route. This will provide additional capacity and alternatives in the event of a disruption of existing routes. Both the UK and German militaries have shown interest in shipping supplies along such a route once it is established.

¶5. (C//REL NATO) Department encourages posts to discuss this future RFI within embassy sections (including Commercial and Economic, USAID Business Development, Office of Defense Cooperation, Management and Political sections) in order to consider potential challenges of implementing the Northern GLOC and in order to consider potential in-country or regional capabilities to handle such commercial shipments. If post is aware of local or regional companies which might want to respond to the RFI, talking points below are provided and can be shared after/after the RFI is released in early November. While USTRANSCOM and the Department will try to notify posts of the date of release, Department suggests post check the www.fedbizopps.gov website over the next few weeks.

¶6. (U) Below are points relevant to upcoming RFI. Post may wish to share these points, as needed, with host governments and/or potential local vendors after the formal RFI has been released to the USG website.

- The United States Transportation Command (USTRANSCOM)

is conducting a market survey on industry capabilities and potential sources for intertheater surface transportation of military cargo to/from Northern Europe to/from various destinations in Afghanistan via Central Asia.

- This market research is to solicit ideas and opinions from experts in the field pertaining to the potential follow-on competition and to determine the level of interested.
- This is not/not a call for offers.
- This is only a request for expression of interest which will provide information on industry capabilities and potential sources.
- Vendor will need to be able to provide time definite delivery, security, in-transit visibility and end-to-end management of containerized and break-bulk cargo.
- Cargo could include dry containers and refrigerated (reefers).
- Interested Vendors are encouraged to completely answer all questions as outlined in the RFI.
- If asked, USTRANSCOM is looking for end-to-end capability, not a vendor who is only interested in one leg of a possible route. Teaming or prime/sub-contractor arrangements are acceptable.
- Complete text of RFI will be posted on www.fedbizopps.gov. To locate the RFI, look under vendor

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for DOD, then go to ODA, then to USTRANSCOM.

17. Requests for additional information about USTRANSCOM and northern supply routes for OEF should be directed to the following points of contact.

- USTRANSCOM Acquisitions - Charles Burton: Unclassified Email Charles.Burton-at-ustranscom.mil
- USTRANSCOM - Kathy Johnson-Casares (FSO on detail to DOD): Unclassified Email Kathy.Johnson-Casares-at-ustranscom.mil;

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TEL 618-550-6189

- State/PM Bureau - Tim Sears: Unclassified Email SearSTA-at-state.gov; TEL 202-736-7742
- State/SCA/RA - Anne Cummings: Unclassified Email CummingsAC-at-state.gov; TEL 202-647-1136

18. As always, Department appreciates the effort our posts do to support Operation Enduring Freedom.

RICE